

REMARKS

Claims 14-28 are pending in this application. Claims 1 to 13 and 29 to 31 have been canceled without prejudice for the purpose of reducing and simplifying the issues on appeal. An appeal of the rejection of claims 14 to 28 is being filed along with this amendment.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 14 to 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Examiner states that there is no mention in the specification for the newly added limitation of “at a zero point of the sinusoidal shape of the annular element and a second end...at a zero point”. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claims 14 to 28.

Applicants’ specification clearly supports the above mentioned limitation. In particular, support can be found in the drawings, specifically FIGS. 1 to 4, and in the specification on page 7, lines 17 to 23 which states that “the connection members 3 are connected to the cylindrical elements 2 [the annular elements] at the “0” [zero] points of the respective sinusoidal paths [the sinusoidal shape].” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 14 to 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 to 4, 7 to 19, and 22 to 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6, 758,859 (“Dang”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,193,747 (“von Oepen”). Claims 5, 6, 20, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Dang in view of von Oepen in further view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20010029351 (“Falotico”).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claims 14 to 28, which are the only claims pending after entry of this amendment, for at least the same reasons previously set forth in Applicants' Responses filed November 18, 2005 and April 17, 2006. Specifically, neither Dang in view of von Oepen nor Dang in view of von Oepen in further view of Falotico suggest or render obvious the present claimed invention.

Claim 14 is the only remaining independent claim. Claim 14 (and claims 15 to 28 which depend therefrom) requires that each connection element have a first end connected to an annular element at a zero point of the sinusoidal shape of the annular element and a second end connected to an adjacent annular element at a zero point of the sinusoidal shape of the adjacent annular element. Neither Dang nor von Oepen has this structure. The connecting elements of Dang and von Oepen are connected between peaks and valleys of sinusoidal annular elements, not at zero points. Further, Falotico has no such structure and does not cure this deficiency.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Dang in view of von Oepen be withdrawn.

Claims 15 to 28 depend from claim 14 which Applicants believe is allowable for the reasons stated above. Since dependent claims 15 to 28 add further limitations to claim 14, Applicants believe that dependent claims 15 to 28 are allowable.

Conclusion

In view of Applicants' amendments and remarks, the claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections, and passage of the case to issue is respectfully requested.

If any additional fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 16-2312. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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